

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

(ECF)

- - - - -:  
AMERICAN STEAMSHIP OWNERS MUTUAL : 04 Civ. 4309 (LAK) (JCF)  
PROTECTION AND INDEMNITY :  
ASSOCIATION, INC., :  
 : MEMORANDUM  
 : AND ORDER  
 :  
Plaintiff, :  
 :  
- against - :  
 :  
ALCOA STEAMSHIP CO., INC., :  
et al., :  
 :  
 :  
Defendants. :  
- - - - -:  
JAMES C. FRANCIS IV  
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE

In a Memorandum and Order dated September 13, 2005 (the "Order"), I determined, among other things, that the American Steamship Owners Protective and Indemnity Association (the "American Club" or the "Club") had waived the attorney-client privilege with respect to an opinion letter dated May 18, 2004, provided to the Club by its counsel, Nourse & Bowles LLP, because it had produced in the course of this litigation numerous opinion letters dealing with the same subject matter and had utilized them in depositions. The American Club now seeks reconsideration of the Memorandum and Order on the grounds that: (1) the May 18, 2005 letter is shielded from disclosure by the work product doctrine; (2) the work product doctrine should also be held to protect an opinion letter dated July 29, 2004; and (3) waiver should not be found on the basis of the "fairness doctrine" because the Club was not selective in its disclosure of opinion letters. The American

Club also asks that I stay enforcement of the Order until this application and any appeal has been heard. (Letter of Shaun F. Carroll dated September 14, 2005 ("Carroll Letter")). The Club's application is granted in part and denied in part.

First, reconsideration is granted with respect to the work product issue. Although no argument based on work product was advanced in the memoranda on the Club's motion, it was briefly raised by counsel on oral argument and alluded to, at least tangentially, in a subsequent letter. However, upon reconsideration, I adhere to my prior determination that the May 18 letter is subject to disclosure. The "fairness doctrine" analysis applies to waiver of work product protection just as it does to waiver of the attorney-client privilege. See In re Grand Jury Proceedings, 219 F.3d 175, 191 (2d Cir. 2000); In re Grand Jury Proceedings, No. M-11-189, 2001 WL 237377, at \*12-13 (S.D.N.Y. March 2, 2001); ESPN, Inc. v. Office of the Commissioner of Baseball, 76 F. Supp. 2d 383, 416 n.34 (S.D.N.Y. 1999); Granite Partners, L.P. v. Bear, Stearns & Co., 184 F.R.D. 49, 54 (S.D.N.Y. 1999). Thus, to the extent that the Club introduced similar opinion letters offensively in this litigation, it waived the work product doctrine as well as the attorney-client privilege for the May 18 letter.

Reconsideration is denied with respect to the July 29, 2004 letter because the Order does not address it in the first place.

With respect to the issue of waiver, the Order was explicitly limited to the May 18, 2004 letter and to a second letter dated June 18, 2004. (Order at 23). The July 29 letter was not then considered, and if counsel now wish to present an application with respect to that document, they may.

Reconsideration is also denied with respect to my determination that the American Club engaged in selective disclosure of its opinion letters. The Club now suggests that it only produced letters relating to insurance years 1989 and before and that a letter authored in 2004 has no similar relevance. (Carroll Letter at 2-3). In fact, the Club has produced and relied on number opinion letters postdating 1989 which, like the May 18, 2004 letter, discuss issues central to this case (Declaration of Lisa A. Bauer dated June 10, 2005, Exhs. L(k), (m), (n), (o), (p)), and this was fully considered at the time the Order was issued.

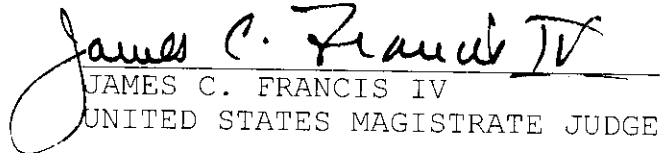
Finally, it is appropriate to stay the effect of the Order insofar as it requires disclosure of the May 18 letter to give the Club an opportunity to appeal this decision. Otherwise, the Club's right to object would, in practical effect, be nullified.

### Conclusion

For the reasons set forth above, reconsideration of my September 13, 2005 Memorandum and Order is granted to the extent that the Club's claim of work product protection for the May 18, 2004 letter is addressed and is otherwise denied. Upon

reconsideration, I adhere to my prior determination and find that, like the attorney-client privilege, work product protection for this letter has been waived. The Club's obligation to disclose the letter is stayed pending determination of a timely appeal of this decision.

SO ORDERED.

  
JAMES C. FRANCIS IV  
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE

Dated: New York, New York  
September 15, 2005

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